



Information for Farmers to Receive a Wireless Point of Sale Terminal for SNAP/EBT

Background

The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 provided funding to increase the number of farmers' markets around the country participating in SNAP (formerly Food Stamps). Specifically, the funds are intended to expand the availability of wireless point-of-sale (POS) equipment in farmers' markets not currently participating in SNAP. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provided funding to the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), who in turn has contracted with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) to implement the program.

Eligible Farmers

As of April, 2013, USDA has expanded eligibility to include not only farmers' markets but also farmers who regularly participate in a farmers' market that is not SNAP authorized and at which no other vendor is SNAP authorized. In order to participate, eligible farmers must not have been SNAP authorized prior to November 18, 2011. Each eligible farmer may receive one terminal.

How can I receive a Wireless Terminal and Accept SNAP Payments?

Step 1

Apply to USDA and receive approval to be a SNAP authorized farmer. You can apply [on line](#) or call the USDA application hotline at 1-877-823-4369 to have an application mailed to you. You can also call Maria Schamberger at 518-431-6021 with any questions about the application process. FNS may take up to 45 days to process an application, once it's complete.

Step 2

Fill out MDAR's application to apply for a wireless terminal. **Applications from farmers will be accepted until June 21, 2013.** If you have already received USDA approval, make sure a copy of the approval is attached (this approval should include your FNS number), along with a copy of the market's rules which meet MDAR's policy on farmers' markets, found [here](#) or at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/agr/markets/farmersmarkets/farmers-markets-policy-final.pdf>.

The market's rules should, at a minimum, address the specifications listed in the policy. Additionally, attach a current list of the market's vendors. If you don't have a copy of the market's rules or list of vendors, contact the market manager.

You must regularly participate (or will participate) in at least one farmers' market not currently SNAP authorized in order to receive a terminal. The farmers' market must be recognized by MDAR to be eligible.

Please allow up to 7 business days for MDAR to process the application.

Note: You may apply to MDAR before receiving USDA approval; however you will not receive any equipment or receive fee reimbursement until you receive your USDA SNAP retailer authorization. Farmers

should send a copy of the approval to MDAR along with the application or, if an application has already been submitted to MDAR, as soon as it is received.

Step 3

If approved, MDAR will send you a copy of the approval, along with the Commonwealth's standard contract form which will outline your responsibilities to MDAR. Please review, sign and return the contract to MDAR.

Step 4

MDAR will sign and return the contract along with the Client Information Form from our contracted vendor, Bank of America, which you will need to complete. At this time, MDAR will also notify Bank of America of the approval.

Fill out and return the Client Information Form to Bank of America. For questions, contact Joe Lindwarm at 631-656-6878 or joe.lindwarm@bankofamericamerchant.com. Upon receipt of the client information form, he will be in touch with you to complete the merchant application.

Step 5

Within 10-14 business days of Bank of America receiving your complete merchant application, the following equipment will be shipped to you:

FD400 Wireless Point of Sale Terminal (1)

Protective Terminal Carrying Case (1)

After receiving the terminal, a representative from Bank of America will be available by phone to provide training on the use of the equipment.

Reimbursement of Monthly Access Fee

Contracts between MDAR and the market will include a reimbursement allowance to markets for the \$15/monthly wireless fee from MDAR for the duration of the contract but ending no later than September 30, 2013.

For all farmers, a seasonal closure option is available from Bank of America where this fee can be suspended during periods the market is closed and the terminal is not in use.

Step 6

Process SNAP payments at your farmers' market stall!

Frequently Asked Questions

How much funding is available?

MDAR has \$80,000 available and anticipates adequate funding for all farmers wishing to participate, although applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until the grant period ends or funding runs out.

When is this available?

Apply now! **Applications from farmers will be accepted until June 21, 2013.**

What is MDAR paying for and what are my costs?

MDAR is paying for the cost of purchasing the terminal, and a protective carrying case. The terminal comes with a standard three month warranty.

MDAR is also reimbursing farmers the \$15 wireless access fee through September 30, 2013.

Farmers are responsible for all other costs associated with accepting SNAP and, if the farmer chooses, credit/debit sales. These costs include the \$.10 EBT transaction fee for each SNAP transaction and other costs such as outreach, staff, credit/debit fees or the optional Monthly Premium Equipment Service Program, (PESP) etc. Costs will vary depending on how you set up the program. For a list of applicable fees, see attached list or contact Joe Lindwarm at Bank of America for more information.

Can I run credit/debit transactions on the same terminal?

Yes, however, any costs associated with credit/debit sales are solely your responsibility.

What are my obligations under this program?

In order to participate, you must regularly participate in a MDAR recognized farmers' market that is not currently SNAP authorized, and at which no other vendor is currently SNAP authorized. You also must receive authorization from USDA to participate as a SNAP retailer. You must abide by all regulations USDA has set forth for SNAP. The terminal you receive from MDAR must be kept secure at all times and you must agree to all terms and conditions set forth in the contract you sign with MDAR and Bank of America.

After the contract period with MDAR ends, then what?

You may keep the terminal, however you will be responsible for the monthly wireless access fee – currently \$15 month and all other associated costs. Your contractual relationship with Bank of America is an extension to the Commonwealth's statewide agreement (PRF44DesignatedOSC) for electronic payments. You will continue to receive the preferred rates provided to MDAR and the Commonwealth for as long as Bank of America remains on this statewide agreement.

My farm was authorized for SNAP prior to November 18, 2011, Can I still participate?

At this time, USDA has restricted funding to farmers not participating in SNAP which are those farmers that did not have SNAP authorization on or before November 18, 2011. However, as a service to farmers in Massachusetts, all farmers are eligible to receive the rates quoted by Bank of America for this program.

MDAR will keep farmers abreast of any changes to the guidelines should there be additional funding in future years.

I participate in more than one farmers market and/or have a farmstand. Can I use the terminal at those locations?

Yes, once you are SNAP authorized by USDA, you may use the terminal and process SNAP payments at any farmers' market you attend, as well as your other sales venues, such as your farmstand. However, through this program, you will only receive one terminal.

Questions or More Information?

General questions, or for more information on SNAP at farmers' markets contact MDAR:

David Webber, 617-626-1754 or David.Webber@state.ma.us.

Questions on the USDA SNAP retailers' application, contact:

Maria Schamberger at USDA, 518-431-6021

Questions on setting up your Bank of America account, credit/debit fees, or the merchant application, contact:

Joe Lindwarm at Bank of America, 631-656-6878 or joe.lindwarm@bankofamericamerchant.com.

Equipment technical issues, billing questions, etc. contact:

Bank of America’s 24x7x365 Technical and Customer Support Help Desk at 1-800-430-7161.